

ABSTRACT

1       The present invention provides an apparatus and method for  
2 automated and rapid loading of a large number of samples for mass  
3 spectrometric analysis using various ionization methods (e.g.  
4 matrix assisted desorption by laser bombardment (MALDI) and  
5 atmospheric pressure ionization (API) methods such as  
6 electrospray). The apparatus utilizes microtiter plates to hold  
7 the sample, optical elements (e.g. fiber optic) to facilitate  
8 automated transport of the ions, and a multiple part capillary  
9 comprising at least two capillary sections joined with airtight  
10 seal by a union for use in mass spectrometry (particularly with  
11 ionization sources) to transport ions between pressure regions of  
12 a mass spectrometer for analysis is described herein. Preferably,  
13 the capillary is useful to transport ions from an elevated  
14 pressure ionization source to a first vacuum region of a mass  
15 analysis system.  
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